

Appln. No.: 10/004,071
Amdt. dated January 11, 2005
Reply to Office action of November 15, 2004

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-4 as being unpatentable over Kashmerick in view of Miyaoh is respectfully requested.

The examiner concedes that Kashmerick fails to disclose the recited non-circular aperture in the plate having a center surrounded by a plurality of angularly spaced outwardly curved edge portions spaced from one another by a plurality of inwardly curved edge portions with the outwardly curved edge portions being spaced a greater distance from the center than that of the inwardly curved edge portions. Such a structure is likewise not shown in Miyaoh, nor is it shown that such wavy portions are folded back upon the gasket plate in which the aperture is formed.

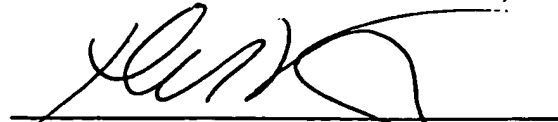
With regard to claim 3, both references fail to teach or suggest the recited integral annular tubular flange extending in a constant wall thickness perpendicular to the plate to an annular wavy edge that varies in height between highs and lows so that the flange may be doubled over into surface-to-surface contact with the gasket plate surrounding the aperture, as called for by claim 3. The tubular flange of Figures 6a and 6b of Kashmerick is of variable thickness and there is nothing in Miyaoh that would alter that teaching without also destroying its objectives.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections of claims 1-4 as being improper and allow the application to proceed to issuance.

The Patent Office is authorized to charge or refund any fee deficiency or excess to Deposit Account No. 08-2789.

Respectfully submitted,

HOWARD & HOWARD ATTORNEYS, P.C.



Robert L. Stearns, Registration No. 36,937
The Pinehurst Office Center, Suite #101
39400 Woodward Avenue
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48304-5151
(248) 723-0427

January 11, 2005

Date